

City of Issaquah, Pre-Application Meeting Submittal:

Project Narrative:

Overview: The proposed Issaquah School District, High School No. 4 and Elementary School No. 17 has been an intensive, highly collaborative Design Build process spanning this last year with Skanska, Bassetti Architects and Issaquah School District (ISD). Unforeseen land acquisition delays, stalled the ability to file a Pre-Application Submittal Request sooner, yet has allowed the design team to pursue and refine multiple site planning options. ISD has been careful to keep the City of Issaquah informed of the project's progress with regular meetings and updates. The team has been sensitive to uphold the City's Guidelines and future planning directives during this design process. With that in mind, we have made conservative planning decisions while maximizing site opportunities to provide a safe and welcoming campus. Our goal of the project moving forward will be to partner with the City in order to ensure that our project meets the School District's and City's needs for the project. A key piece of this is the district's need to open the school in the fall of 2022.

Development: The site is adjacent to Providence Point on the former Churchome property. This neighboring community comprises of primarily single-family residences with several larger scale community gathering facilities such as a Clubhouse, Indoor Pool, Café, Fitness Center and tennis courts. Beyond Providence Point, lies single-family residential developments with retail and Pine Lake Middle School to the north.

Site access to the proposed High School and Elementary School is from 228th Ave SE. Site improvements along this corridor are anticipated including a traffic light at the entry drive. We have also anticipated frontage improvements to 228th and are currently working on a traffic study to support the mitigation needed for the added traffic. Site access was carefully considered to provide a safe distance from adjacent intersections, preserve existing trees while trying to minimize grading and infrastructure costs for the project. The entry drive slopes up into the hillside with terraced, landscaped retaining walls to the north and south. Near the crest of the entry drive is an intersection that provides student and parent access to the high school. Further up the road is the elementary school access for parents. Finally, the road continues to provide access to staff parking in the parking garage, bus areas, and loading docks for both schools. The goal was to move the "back of house" uses to areas that would not be accessible by the public. The streets are defined by lush landscape screening, pedestrian sidewalks, pedestrian scale site lighting and vistas to the schools.

Given the tight site constraints and desire to preserve as many trees and natural features as possible, site grading and building is concentrated within the existing central open area, leaving the boundary largely untouched and minimizing impacts to the neighboring properties.

Program: The 215,000 sf high school is designed to serve 1,400 students in grades 9-12 and a new 73,000 sf elementary school serves 600 students in grades K-5. The high school includes general use classrooms, library, commons, food services, performing arts center, gymnasium with auxiliary gyms and supporting administrative spaces. Elementary school includes general use classrooms, commons, gymnasium, library, music and supporting administrative spaces.

Site amenities on the approximately 35 acre site includes football/track & field with grandstands, softball & baseball fields, tennis courts, structured parking for 270 cars, surface parking for 370 cars and a large pedestrian plaza. Pedestrian connections throughout the site is an important element that ties the campus together.

Design Standards: The site lies outside of the Central Issaquah Neighborhoods however many of the guidelines outlined in the Central Issaquah Plan have influenced our site planning and building decisions. Following the definition of Compact Schools, we have created a pedestrian friendly campus that preserves much of the natural landscape and trees. Structured parking provides stalls for 50% of the required spaces with tennis courts above.

Bus drop off and loading docks have been designed at the rear or sides of the buildings to reduce views of functions. Additional screening walls, although not yet shown, are anticipated.

Architecturally, both schools are three story in height to minimize their footprint and site impacts. Distinct programmatic features, such as linear classroom wings, large glassy commons, gymnasiums, libraries allow the building massing to be varied which also creates intimate outdoor play and gathering spaces. Similar in design vernacular, both schools provide covered entrances into lofty glass lobbies. Classroom wings span east to west to take advantage of daylighting and offer operable windows. Connections to the outdoors is important yet purposeful to provide direct access to playgrounds and athletic plazas. While sustainability helps inform many of our design decisions, these buildings are not seeking green building certification.